

Message Text

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TO OAU COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 157333

FOL CAIRO 15353 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO JIDDA LONDON MADRID
MOSCOW PARIS TEL AVIV JUNE 17. 1978 REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 15353

DEPT. PASS OAU COLLECTIVE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR MO AG OAU MR

SUBJECT: MODERATE AFRICAN STRATEGY ON SAHARA QUESTION

SUMMARY: EGYPTIANS, FRESH FROM PULSE TAKING MISSION IN
MODERATE AFRICAN STATES,BELIEVE MODERATES WISH TO AVOID
DISCUSSION OF SAHARA AT OAU KHARTOUM SUMMIT. ADMISSION
OF FAILURE WOULD LEAVE ALGERIANS FREE TO RAISE ISSUE
MORE VEHEMENTLY IN NON-OAU FORA SUCH AS UN OR NAC. END
SUMMARY.

1. MFA AFRICA DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR AHMED SIDQI, WHO HAS
JUST RETURNED FROM A NINE NATION AFRICAN SWING WITH MFA
MINSTATE BOUTROS GHALI, INFORMED EMBOFFS JUNE 19
THAT AFRICAN MODERATES' STRATEGY IS TO KEEP SAHARA QUES-
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TION OFF AGENDA FOR OAU KHARTOUM SUMMIT. MODERATES,
INCLUDING EGYPTIANS, BELIEVE ALGERIANS MANEUVERING TO
PLACE SAHARA QUESTION ON AGENDA TO FORCE CONCLUSION,
AFTER PROTRACTED DEBATE, THAT OAU INCAPABLE OF HANDLING
ISSUE. THIS WOULD ALLOW ALGERIANS TO RAISE SAHARA
QUESTION AT OTHER FORA, SUCH AS UN AND NAC, PUTTING UN-
DESIRED PRESSURE ON MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA.

2. MODERATE STRATEGY IS THUS TO KEEP SAHARA QUESTION BOTTLED UP IN OAU, WITHOUT ADMISSION OF FAILURE TO RESOLVE ISSUE. PREPARATIONS FOR EVENTUAL EXTRAORDINARY SUMMIT COULD GO FORWARD. ONE WAY TO AVOID WRANGLING OVER SAHARA ISSUE AT KHARTOUM, IN MODERATE VIEW, WOULD BE TO PROPOSE "COMMITTEE OF WISE MEN" TO PREPARE FOR EXTRAORDINARY SUMMIT. WHILE THIS NOT PARTICULARLY NEW IDEA, AND HAS EVEN BEEN RAISED BY SIDQI IN PAST, IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION FOR MODERATES IS TO AVOID DECLARATION OF OAU INABILITY TO HANDLE SAHARA AT KHARTOUM. ELTS UNQUOTE VANCE

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